**Reduction of levy and customs duty on petroleum products**

217. SHRI DARA SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether he has suggested any package to the Minister of Finance pertaining to budgetary allocations this year pertaining to petroleum products with a view to reduce levy on crude;

(b) whether Government propose to cut customs duty from 7.5 per cent at present to 2.5 per cent on petrol and diesel; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHAJ. PATEL): (a) to (c) The Union Budget proposals for the year 2007-08 are under the consideration of the Government.

**Consumption of LPG in Uttarakhand**

†218. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the proportion of the population using LPG in various parts of the country;

(b) whether any special measures are being taken by his Ministry to raise its utilization;

(c) whether it is a fact that the supply of LPG is being hindered in the hilly areas of Uttarakhand for last few months; and

(d) the measures being taken to increase the consumption of LPG in Uttarakhand, a very sensitive State from the environmental view point, for safeguarding the forests?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHAJ. PATEL): (a) and (b) As on 01.01.2007, Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) were operating 9344 LPG distributorships in the country. Through these distributorships, OMCs are serving about 932 lakh LPG customers covering 48.02% population in the country.

Government have given freedom to OMCs to set up LPG distributorships in accordance with their commercial assessment and locations are identified by them on the basis of available refill sale potential for sustaining an

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

independent distributorship. However, Government have advised OMCs to draw up Marketing Plans for covering semi-urban and rural areas. OMCs have finalized a common industry marketing plan covering 791 locations for setting up LPG distributorships mainly in rural and urban-rural (semi-urban) locations.

(c) and (d) As on 01.01.2007, OMCs were operating 165 LPG distributorships in the State of Uttarakhand. Through these distributorships, OMCs are serving about 14 34 lakh LPG customers covering 89.51% population in the State of Uttarakhand. In addition to this, 5 more LPG distributorships are at various stages of commissioning.

The supply of LPG was hindered in Uttarakhand during the month of July, 2006 due to some restrictions imposed by District Administration on transportation of heavy vehicles on account of "Kanwaria" movement. However, at present, there is no shortage of LPG in the State of Uttarakhand including hilly areas and LPG supplies to distributors are being made by OMCs in accordance with the genuine demand of customers registered with the LPG distributors.

**Price of crude Oil**

†219. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHl:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the minimum price of crude oil was 51.05 dollar per barrel under Indian Basket in the International market during January, 2007;

(b) if not, the details in this regard;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the prices of petrol and diesel were reduced by rupees two and one respectively in the last year during November, 2006 in the country; and

.(d) if so, the average price of crude oil under Indian Basket prevailed in November, October, 2006 in the international market?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.